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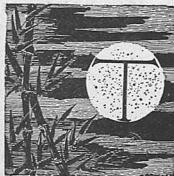
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

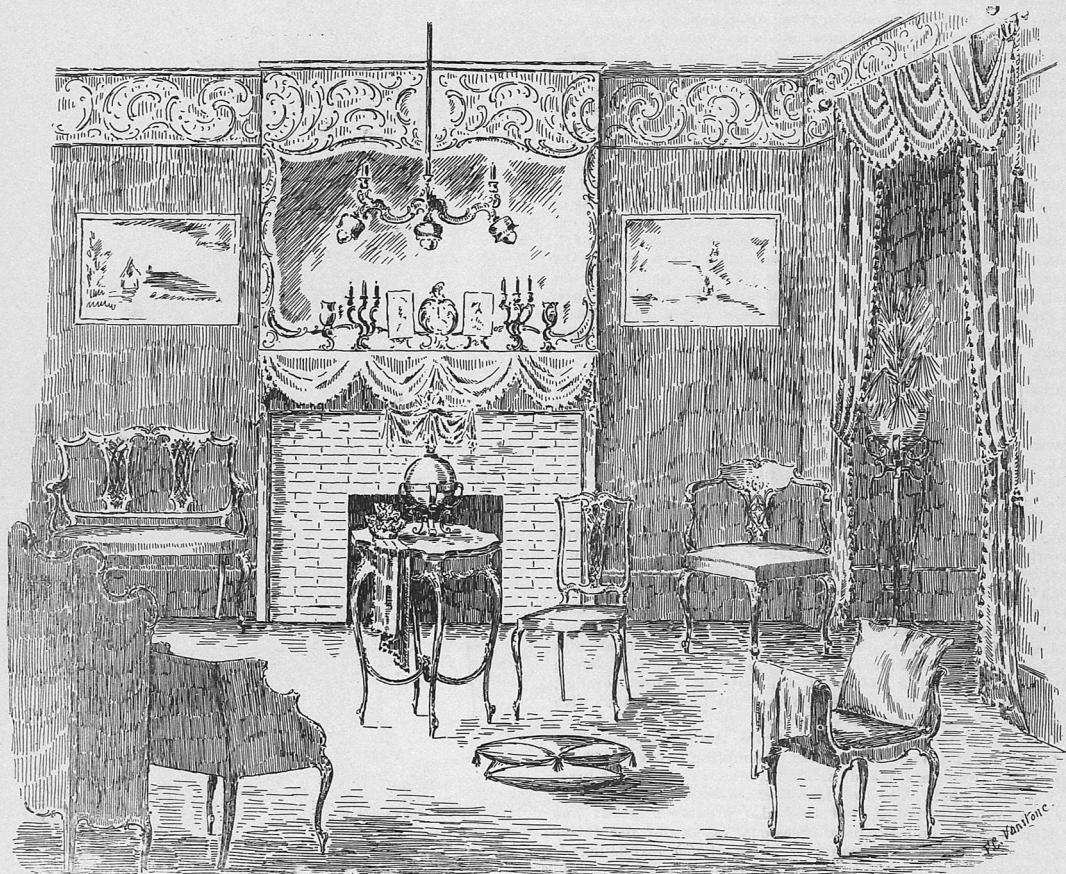
HIROSHIGE'S LANDSCAPES AND OUTAMARO'S WOMEN.



THE light and graceful decoration of Japanese art was installed last spring by M. S. Bing in the Durand-Ruel gallery, Rue le Peletier, Paris. For the first time, perhaps, was attempted the presentation of pictures of the Extreme-Orient in a special way to distract the visitor from the perturbations of daily existence, from the influence of Parisian life. At the very entrance we felt the sensation of a departure from conventional surroundings and the influence of a new atmosphere. Not that the arrangement of the salons was complicated; on the contrary, nothing could be more simple. There were portières of painted tapestry orna-

criticism in the name we know not what rigorous code of European aesthetics. Without doubt the question was Japanese art, because it had its origin in Japan, because it was the product of a race and the reflection of a country. It would be strange were it otherwise. The singularity is that a number of our modern artists willingly in their art Japanize the aspect of things which they have seen with their European eyes of the nineteenth century. There is here a factitious cerebral alchemy, a production marked by sterility in advance. It is the same as to expect an apple tree to bear oranges and mandarins. But with Japanese artists the particularity is indulged in on the contrary, to delight all those who take an interest in the varied manifestations of human genius. So much the better if art thus speaks a language not yet understood by us, if it only teaches us to understand life and its varied sentiments.

We find the unique in Japanese art, but it is not so bizarre as we may suppose, and the reason is very simple. The forms



HOW TO FURNISH A SIX-ROOM FLAT FOR 600 DOLLARS.

DRAWN BY F. C. VANSTONE.

PARLOR.—CARPET, 40 DOLS.; 3-PIECE SUITE, CONSISTING OF DIVAN, RECEPTION CHAIR AND CORNER CHAIR, 65 DOLS.; TABOURETTE, 15 DOLS.; OCCASIONAL CHAIR, 25 DOLS.; TABLE, 15 DOLS.; SCREEN, 7 DOLS.; CURTAINS, 8 DOLS.; LAMP, 6 DOLS.; PORTIÈRES, 8 DOLS. TOTAL, 189 DOLS.

mented with golden iris in which a crushed strawberry shade blended softly with a sea-green tint. The colored frames of the pictures were in harmony with the stuffs on the walls. We escaped the red velvet of the usual expositions, and felt the sensation of a particular promenade, of a special rendezvous of art.

Notwithstanding this laudable precaution, it must be said that the *exotisme* was weakened in this collection of engravings, and its foreign character has been too strongly asserted by

of art are only certain appearances, certain signs with the aid of which artists express reality. This reality is everywhere the same. Everywhere it is nature, the sun, the water, the clouds, light. Everywhere it is the human being, clothed with different garments, engaged in different social occupations, but manifesting almost the same passions, the same actions. The man and woman of to-day dwell in Paris, and sensible to the influence of art, do not remain long out of their element before those en-

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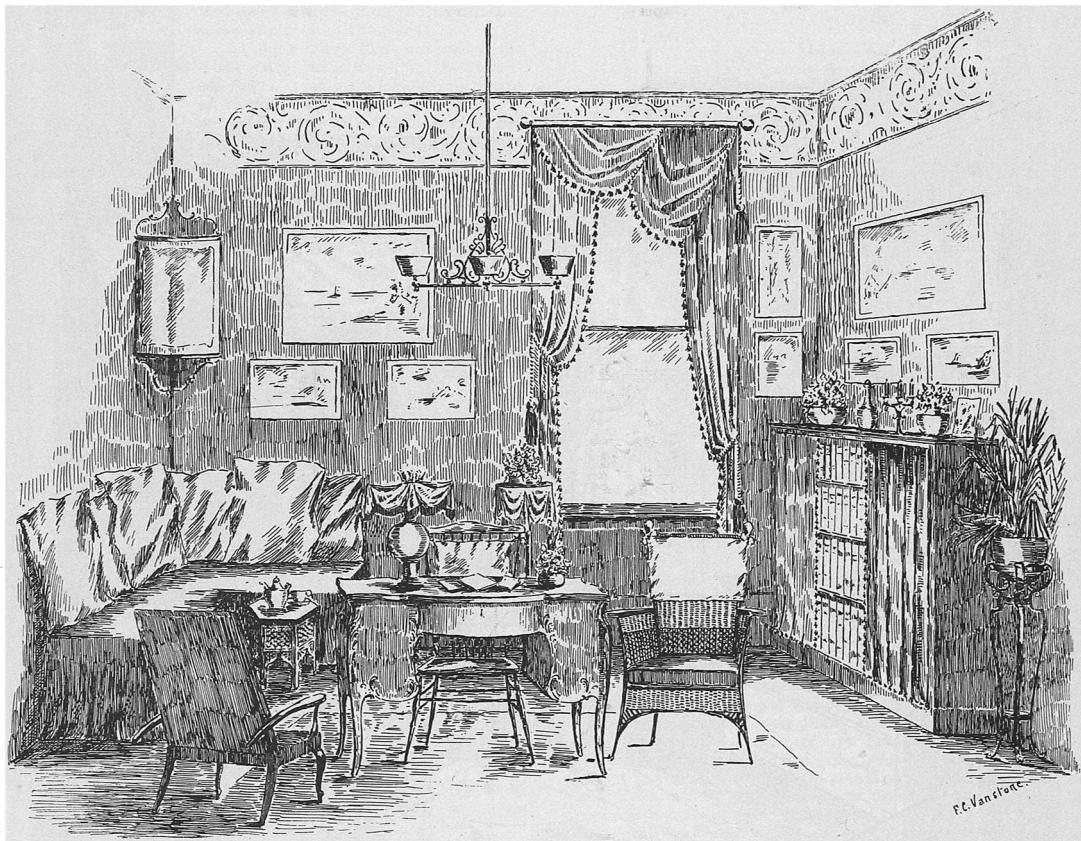
gravings of the Extreme-Orient. They very quickly perceive the real signification and penetrate the supposed mystery.

There are two of those artists of the Extreme-Orient, Hiroshige and Outamaro, who were represented in those coquettish little salons by about three hundred engravings which could be examined in a single afternoon. Well one did not notice at once that they are two observers of the same race as all those whose works are admired in our museums. The first is above all a landscape artist, although he has not neglected in his numerous works the silhouette by the way, the animal form, the drawing and painting of flowers. Now, although these sketches may cause surprise at first on account of the simplification of their lines and the distribution of tone, they quickly appear like landscapes with their first grounds, horizons, different parts of their fields, foliage, water clouds. After a few moments passed in front of those works of Hiroshige, one per-

Hokusai, who possesses the creative power, but he is a wise and sure guide, and it is a thoughtful pedestrian who remarks to those who have confided themselves to him, the beauty of a village lighted by the moon on the banks of a river, the charm of the rain as it fell upon the rose bushes, the repose of the flotillas on the calm water during a clear night.

The other, Outamaro, is one of those masters of all times and all countries, who have given the most beautiful, never-to-be-forgotten representations of women. We accept his slightly varied visages, cold, puerile, hieratic, the features scarcely indicated, the narrow eyes, the lips detached like rose petals, as soon as we perceive the decision taken by the artist to subordinate all to the fine graces and style of the silhouette.

These silhouettes are admirable in suppleness and harmony. Outamaro has designed delightful groups of mothers and children in which he has marvelously protracted how all the



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LIBRARY.—CARPET, 20 DOL.; BOOKS, 8 DOL.; WRITING DESK, 15 DOL.; COUCH AND RUGS, 14 DOL.; MORRIS CHAIR, 25 DOL.; DESK CHAIR, 10 DOL.; WICKER CHAIR, 10 DOL.; MOORISH TABLE, 5 DOL.; CURTAINS, 4 DOL.; LAMP, 3 DOL. TOTAL, 114 DOL.

ceived the infinite dexterity with which the artist delighted in indicating the distance by a detail of the first ground. The curve of a hill, the pilework of a bridge, the step-aside between two sailing vessels, the master of a group of boats, the span of a hawk's wings.

He is an ingenious portrayer, he understands how to give color to his impressions, to indicate the season and the hour that govern his landscapes. He knows the shades of spring and autumn as well as the glaring tints of summer and winter, he describes with certitude the fresh mornings, the clear sunsets, the soft gloaming. He is not a genial, rapid designer like

body of the woman is commanded in all its attitudes and gestures by maternal cares. He has painted sumptuous courtesans clad in precious stuffs, and he will remain in art the sensual historiography of the Yoshiwara Quarter. But this is because all his life, by reason of his art, even aside from the perspicacious remark of Edwin de Goncourt, he had been a passionate lover of feminine allurements, and an amorous designer of *svelte* forms, enthused even to transform and elongate the diminutive creatures of his own country. He has painted marvelous flowers with slender graceful stems, he has given them an incomparable rhythm when he invokes their

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

parade on the borders of the Sumida on cool days, on festive nights, when he sows the field with pale iris. He asserts himself a painter of flesh when he causes a pale shoulder to rise from a wondrously beautiful gown, when he lets us see through the waves the supple bodies of the bathers. He has even gone further than decorative art in the portrait of a capricious creature, Célemène, a Japanese with a gay countenance who is visibly affected, and in that physiognomy of a young girl who is listening to a confidence and expresses so well by the indecision in her face the trouble and timidity of a first love.

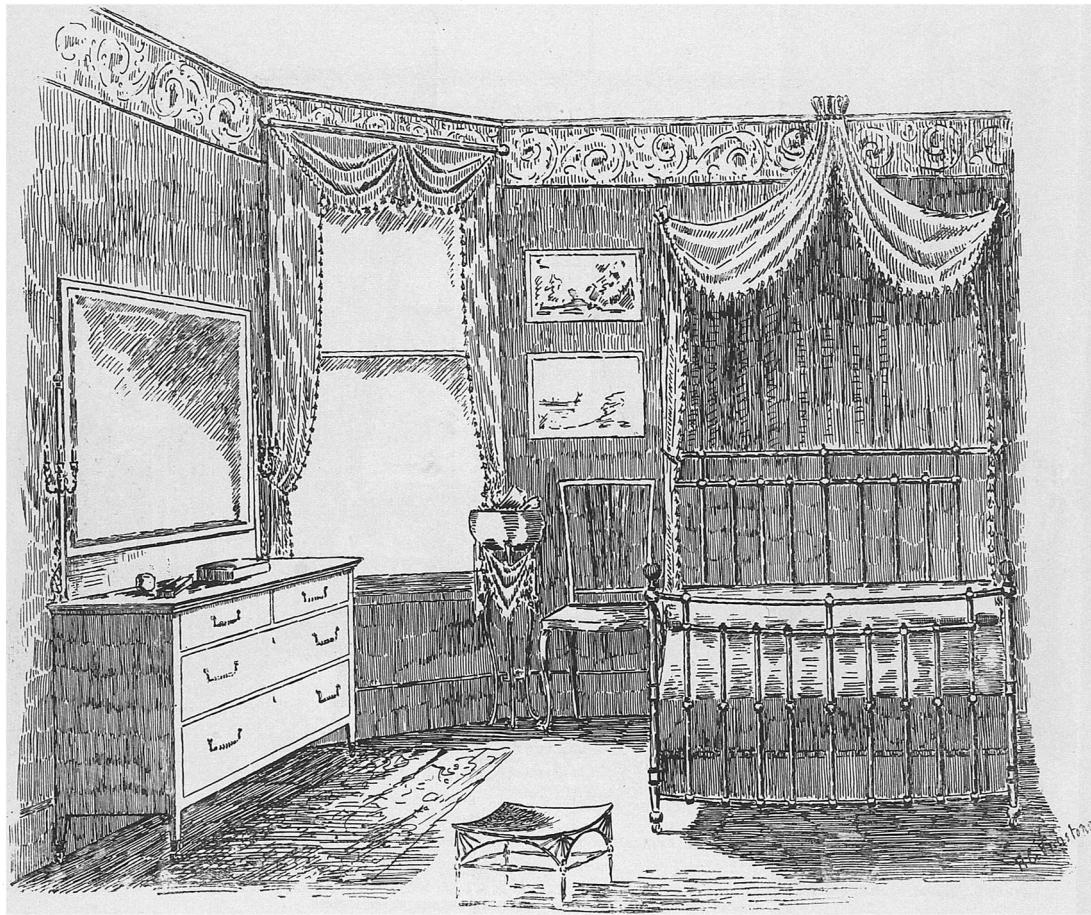
DECORATIVE NOTES.

THE hygienist puts in a word for the downfall of the tidy and all its family. In the room full of furniture draperies there is no chance for fresh air, and the festive microbe unwit-

as a relic of barbarism? For the tired Mr. Jellaby's who still leave the marks of their heads upon the wall there must presumably always be some provision, but they are few in number.

And what ignoble waste of the flying hours in the work of tidy-making! The adornment of the home is a noble and praiseworthy ambition and a sphere in which woman rightly reigns supreme; but loud and heartfelt will be the psalms raised by long-suffering masculinity when with her ever increasing knowledge and widening influence she decrees the fall of the antimacassar.

SPECIMENS of the Vernis Martin style of furniture were most conspicuous in the exhibit of Louis Majorelle at the Columbian Exposition. The secret of this method of decorating furniture was for many years classed among what may be called the lost arts, but has recently been rediscovered, and the repro-



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BEDROOM No. 1.—BRASS BED AND CURTAINS, 35 DOL.; BUREAU, 20 DOL.; CHAIR, 2 DOL.; SHOE CHAIR, 2 DOL.; CURTAINS, 3 DOL.; MATTING, 2 DOL.; RUG, 2 DOL.; STAND, 1 DOL. TOTAL, 67 DOL.

tingly brought in upon the gown of the caller has a fine chance to make itself quite at home. Should a window be opened, away go the antimacassars, followed by the lamp shades, the banners and the fire screens till chaos reigns. Again it may be urged that as pomatum on the hair, the first *raison d'être* of the tidy, has now gone out of fashion, why not do away with that, too,

ductions are said to be coming much into favor. This furniture can be made to look extremely attractive, though any extravagance of detail will soon bring it into disfavor, because of its tendency to gaudiness of coloring and too great freedom of design. The specimens in the French exhibit, however, were in the best of taste and exceedingly attractive.